

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
FISHERIES DIVISION

JOB PROGRESS REPORT
Research Project Segment

State Montana Title Reservoir Investigations
Project No. F-34-R-8 Title Life Cycle Study of Westslope Cutthroat Trout
Job No. III-a
Period Covered July 1, 1973 through June 30, 1974

ABSTRACT

Compilation of data was started as related to land management within the Hungry Horse Creek drainage and Hungry Horse Reservoir operations. Analysis was begun of data collected about westslope cutthroat trout in Hungry Horse Creek between the years of 1963 and 1972.

BACKGROUND

Life cycle information on the westslope cutthroat trout (Salmo clarki, subsp.) is very limited but is necessary to properly manage this game fish. A fish trap was operated in Hungry Horse Creek drainage each year between 1963 and 1972. These traps monitored movements of adult and juvenile fish into and out of the drainage. Almost all field work on this job was completed in 1972 and the trap structure was removed in September, 1972. Yearly progress reports have been prepared and write-up of a final report started.

PROCEDURES

The final job report will be prepared in two sections; one dealing with life cycle of the cutthroat and the other with relationships of the fish with its stream and reservoir environment. Re-analysis of all data collected since 1963 should be done. New data to be collected includes history of land management within the Hungry Horse Creek drainage and operation of Hungry Horse Reservoir. This information will be obtained from U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

FINDINGS

Requests have been submitted to U.S. Forest Service for a history of land management practices in the Hungry Horse Creek drainage. Resource management in this drainage has stressed growth of timber and timber harvest. Vegetative cover in the drainage has been affected by forest fires, timber harvest and thinning. Requests have been submitted to U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for a

history of the operation of Hungry Horse Reservoir. The reservoir is used for electrical generation and flood control storage. Re-analysis of data collected by Montana Department of Fish and Game personnel started at the time include age and growth and estimates of spawning populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that work be continued on the write-up of the final job report. It is estimated that the report on life cycle information will be completed about June 30, 1976, while the report dealing with relationships between the fish and its environment will be completed about September 30, 1978. It is anticipated that the fish trap may be re-installed and operated for one year in 1977.

Prepared by: Joe E. Huston

Date: July 2, 1974